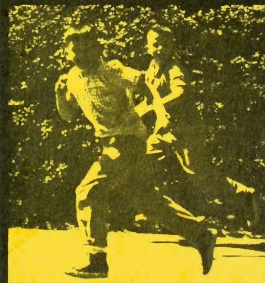


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RECREATION STUDY

ALBEMARLE, NORTH CAROLINA



The preparation of this report was financially aided through a Federal grant from the Urban Renewal Administration of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, under the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Recreation is, perhaps, one of the largest industries in the United States, with an estimated annual expenditure of more than 45 billion dollars. One needs only to look back a short time into history to see the magnitude of this tremendous growth in expenditures for leisure activity and the importance of recreation in individual and group life.

National trends indicate that population growth will add nearly 100 million people in the next twenty years. Per capita personal income is expected to increase by more than \$1,000 during the same period. The present work week, already below 40 hours, is expected to approach 32 hours by 1985. By that time, the average person will travel 50% more miles per year than he does now. All of these trends point to an unprecedented rise in the demand for recreation, for these are the factors -- population, per capita income, leisure time, and mobility -- which most affect that demand.

Public Recreation -- A Solution

Because of the pressures being built up, the public is seeking recreation at an unexpected rate. Boating, bowling, camping and sight-seeing have experienced recent booms. But, the rise in participation is broad, touching almost every imaginable form of recreation.

The wealthier portion of our population has sought a solution by building private facilities or joining private clubs which offer activities the average person cannot afford. These clubs impose high entrance fees and restrict their membership to keep from being swamped.

What happens to the average citizen who makes up over 90% of the population? Without question he has been at a disadvantage. He cannot afford to build swimming pools, tennis courts,

and ball fields for his family -- indeed, few wealthy people can. Land is expensive, so most people buy a small lot on which to build. Usually, only a small yard can be provided at best, and it is often landscaped and planted with trees. Developments spring up covering completely whole sections, with no land set aside for recreation and park areas.

How are the recreation needs of these people to be met? To-day all levels of government generally accept responsibility for providing the public with open space for recreation. The Federal Government, through the new Bureau of Outdoor Recreation is coordinating efforts of various departments to provide additional national recreation areas. State agencies have been developing parks and other areas to be used for recreation, not only to meet the demand from residents but also to attract tourists. Nearly every important city in the country has a program for the acquisition and development of new land to meet rising demand. Public areas supplement the private and commercial recreation areas and give everybody a place to go and something to do.

Advantages of Public Recreation

Why should public recreation be provided? What are its advantages to a community?

- First and foremost is the fact that public recreation provides programs in which any person in the city can participate, regardless of age, sex, race and social or economic status. Average family income for about 60% of Albemarle's families is presently under \$5,000 per year. The needs of these people are largely unmet by the YMCA, country clubs, and commercial areas. They must use such public areas as are available, or do without constructive recreation.
- It has been proven many times that a wholesome public recreation program helps deter juvenile delinquency and crime. Young people have more leisure time and less home responsibilities and chores than ever before in history. Teen-agers will find something to do, whether it is wholesome or not. A well-organized public recreation program can provide an outlet for their energies.

- More than just providing something to do, public recreation can help develop a person physically and socially. A chief need of children, teen-agers, and adults is healthful physical activity. The heart and lungs are strengthened by proper exercise, and the large muscles of the body are developed. Physical activity and the quieter passive leisure pursuits can help provide a relief from tension and thus foster mental health.
- Providing safe, supervised play areas for children decreases accidents. Children are provided with an environment where they do not have to compete with automobiles for the only common open spaces available -- the streets.
- It is no secret that industrial management places a high priority on recreation facilities and opportunities when deciding where to locate new plants. Recreation helps to reduce absenteeism and labor turnover as well as facilitate recruitment. Industries are frequently the best supporters of recreation in a community once they establish themselves.
- Property values are increased by recreation areas that are properly landscaped, maintained, and operated. Many subdivisions, recognizing this fact, are currently building into their plans provisions for excellent recreation facilities for their customers.

Purpose

This report presents the findings and recommendations of a recreation study made in Albemarle. It takes into consideration general trends in recreation, local factors influencing demand, planning standards, existing areas and opportunities, and differences in the various areas in the City and their deficiencies.

The study is focused primarily on the area lying inside the corporate limits of Albemarle, but the development outside the City and adjacent to its boundaries has also been examined. Additionally, some attention has been given to the larger region within which Albemarle lies, and a survey has been made of the opportunities for city residents to seek recreation in this region. For study purposes, Stanly County has been chosen as the appropriate region.

CHAPTER II

FACTORS INFLUENCING RECREATION DEMAND

Physical Characteristics

Albemarle and the Stanly County area have an excellent environment for recreation -- a mild, healthful climate, varied and interesting topography, a series of man-made lakes, and good highways.

Climate

The area has a mean annual temperature of 62°, ranging from an average of 44° in January to 79° in July. The average annual rainfall is 46 inches, and the average number of frost-free days is about 210. Because of a comfortable humidity, outdoor activities may be enjoyed even during the hottest summer days.

Topography

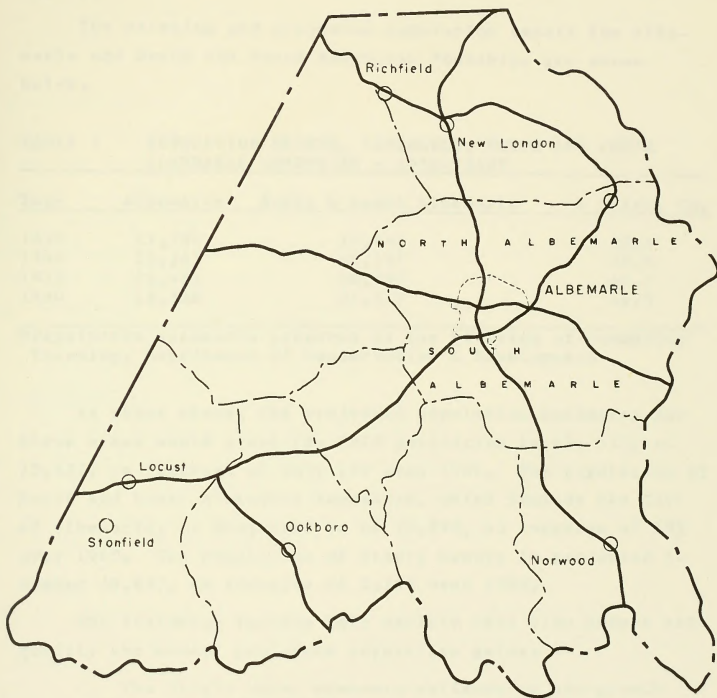
Beautiful scenery, ranging from the low crests of the ancient Uwharrie Mountains in the east to gently rolling hills and flat land farther west, is a Stanly County trademark. Numerous streams drain the area, including the Pee Dee and Yadkin Rivers on the east boundary, and the Rocky River which forms the southern boundary. A chain of lakes on the Pee Dee and Yadkin Rivers, High Rock Lake, Badin Lake and Lake Tillery are important recreation assets of the county.

Social Characteristics

Social characteristics are those factors which shape the life patterns of individuals and the community as a whole. Since recreation is directly influenced by these characteristics, it is useful to examine them in order to get a better picture of the inner workings of the community.

Population Growth

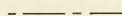
Over the past fifty years, Albemarle and its environs have grown slowly, but steadily. The 1960 population of Albemarle



LEGEND



STANLY COUNTY BOUNDARIES



TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES



HIGHWAYS



ALBEMARLE CITY LIMITS

was 12,261, with North and South Albemarle Townships containing 20,197. Thus the two township areas enclosing Albemarle held about one-half of the County's population, which numbered 40,873.

The existing and projected population totals for Albemarle and North and South Albemarle Townships are shown below.

TABLE 1 POPULATION GROWTH, ALBEMARLE, NORTH AND SOUTH
ALBEMARLE TOWNSHIPS - 1950-1980*

Year	Albemarle	North & South Albemarle	% Stanly Co.
1950	11,798	19,441	52.4
1960	12,261	20,197	49.4
1970	12,451	20,990	48.1
1980	12,528	21,419	46.5

*Population estimates prepared by the Division of Community Planning, Department of Conservation & Development

As shown above, the projected population estimates for these areas would place the 1970 population in the City at 12,451, an increase of only 190 over 1960. The population of North and South Albemarle Townships, which include the City of Albemarle, is projected to be 20,990, an increase of 793 over 1960. The population of Stanly County is projected to number 43,637, an increase of 2,764 over 1960.

The following factors help explain this slow growth and qualify the modest projected population gains.

- The City's heavy economic reliance on non-growth and slow growth industries has resulted in a net loss of 294 persons employed from 1950 to 1960.
- Added to the loss of industrial jobs is the increasing decline of job opportunities in agriculture in the County, accounting in large measure for the out-migration of 2,000 persons from 1950 to 1960 in Stanly County.
- A declining birth rate in the City is another important factor. The present birth rate in Albemarle (1960) is 13% lower than the average

for other North Carolina cities in its size grouping.

Loss of jobs and economic opportunity affect primarily people in the 20 to 64 age groups. When a community loses people in this group, it is natural for the birth rate to decline.

Racial Composition

There has been no significant change in the racial composition of the population in Albemarle or Stanly County in the past ten years and none is foreseen for the next decade. In 1960, the white population comprised 87.4% of Albemarle's population, with 12.6% Negro, while Stanly County had 89% white and 11% Negro. About half of the Negro population lives in North and South Albemarle Townships, the remaining half reside in other areas in the County.

Age Distribution

While the total population of Albemarle is not expected to show much increase in the next decade, Changes are taking place in the relative sizes of the various age groupings.

Table 2 shows the projections by age groups up to 1980, as well as present conditions.

TABLE 2 POPULATION IN SELECTED AGE GROUPS IN ALBEMARLE
1960-1980*

Age Groups	1950	1960	1970	1980
Under 5	1,273	1,209	1,238	1,301
5-9	1,040	1,170	1,045	1,141
10-14	847	1,190	1,130	1,157
15-19	917	908	1,022	913
20-64	7,119	6,859	6,654	6,220
65+	602	925	1,362	1,873
Total	11,798	12,261	12,451	12,605

*Population estimates prepared by the Division of Community Planning, Department of Conservation & Development

Most significant is the projected increase in the group 65 years of age and over. This group is expected to grow from 925 in 1960 to 1,873 by 1980, an increase of 102%. Continuing out-migration is expected to trim down the 20-64 age group, from 6,859 in 1960 to 6,220 in 1980, a decrease of 9%. The 5 years and under age group is expected to increase slightly, from 1,209 in 1960 to 1,301 in 1980, an increase of 7%.

Distribution by Race and Sex

Table 3 gives the distribution by sex and race for each age group in 1960.

TABLE 3 POPULATION IN SELECTED AGE GROUPS BY SEX AND RACE
ALBEMARLE - 1960

Age Groups	White		Negro		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Under 5	529	464	110	106	1,209
5-9	508	472	82	108	1,170
10-14	515	490	100	85	1,190
15-19	367	408	63	70	908
20-64	2,823	3,280	350	406	6,859
65+	335	529	25	36	925
Total	5,077	5,643	730	811	12,261

There were more white males under the age of 20 than white females, although the white females as a group out-number the males by 526. Negro females under the age of 20 out-number Negro males, and, as a group, Negro females also predominate.

Taken as a total, males and females aged 20 or under make up 35% of the white population, as contrasted to 47% of the Negro population for the same age group.

Family Size

The average household size (the average number of persons per dwelling unit) is relatively low, 3.18 for Albemarle, compared with 3.38 for the average North Carolina city of its size in 1960.

Both family size and birth rate for Albemarle have declined since 1960, indicating that growth will probably remain low unless there is considerable in-migration.

Education

The level of education in Albemarle has risen from an average of 8.5 school years completed in 1950 to 9.3 completed in 1960. Over 34% of the population had completed four years of high school or more in 1960. During the 1962-63 school year, the elementary school enrollment for the City was 1,625, junior high school was 817, and high school was 662.

Total enrollment in public schools in Albemarle is shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4 TOTAL ENROLLMENTS, WHITE AND NEGRO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ALBEMARLE - 1962-63

	<u>School</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
White:	Senior High	527
	Central Junior High	615
	Central Elementary	551
	East Elementary	204
	North Elementary	354
	West Elementary	214
Negro:	Kingville Senior High	135
	Kingville Junior High	202
	Kingville Elementary	302
	Total	3,104

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

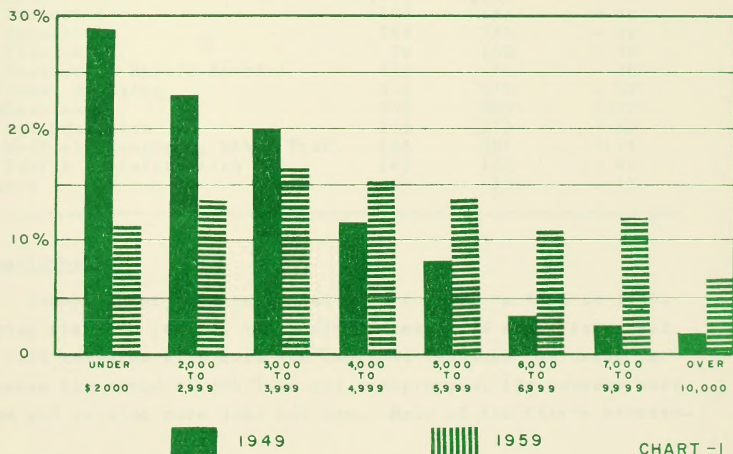
Economic characteristics give an indication of the ability of a community to pay for goods or services. Furthermore, they indicate the potential for recreation demand.

Income

From 1949 to 1959, the median income of Albemarle families rose from \$2,884 to \$4,554, an increase of 58%. The latter figure is well above the 1959 median income for the State, \$3,956.

Chart 1 gives the percent distribution of Albemarle families by total money income in 1949 and 1959.

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY TOTAL INCOME ALBEMARLE, NORTH CAROLINA 1949 - 1959



Employment

Total employment in Albemarle in 1960 slipped to 5,276, a net loss of 294 jobs from 1950. The biggest employer in the City, textile manufacturing, led the list with a loss of 529 jobs. Personal services and construction were next with a loss of 184 jobs and 84 jobs, respectively.

The industries showing the most growth in Albemarle in the decade were professional services, with 474 new jobs. Manufacturing industries added 165 new jobs. Table 5 shows the employment by industry for 1950 and 1960, and the net loss or gain in jobs.

TABLE 5 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY - ALBEMARLE, 1950 and 1960

	1950	1960	Net Loss or Gain
Total Employed	5,570	5,276	-294
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery	34	54	+ 20
Manufacturing	2,923	2,559	-364
Textiles	2,549	2,020	-529
Other Manufacturing	374	539	+165
Construction	312	228	- 84
Transportation	200	184	- 16
Commerce	1,116	1,108	- 8
Wholesale	109	151	+ 42
Retail	795	743	- 52
Finance	90	140	+ 50
Business & Repair Service	122	74	- 48
Personal Services	470	378	- 92
Professional	456	693	+237
All Education	148	230	+ 82
Medical, Hospital, Other Prof.	166	281	+115
Public Administration	142	182	+ 40
Others	59	72	+ 13

Unemployment

Unemployment increased from 1.7% in 1950 to 6.3% in 1960. During the same period, the number of employed males decreased by 7.3% compared with 2.1% for employed females. In order to reverse the trend of job loss and unemployment the economy must grow and provide more jobs for men. Most of the City's manufac-

turing is in slow growth or non-growth industries - textiles, furniture, and lumber manufacturing. More diversification in manufacturing seems to be needed to stabilize the economy and open up new job opportunities.

Average Work Week and Vacations

Not only are incomes rising, but the long-run trend toward a shorter work week continues nation-wide, dropping from over 45 hours per week in 1941 to less than 40 hours today. Equally significant, the average number of weeks of paid vacation time has doubled during the same period. Labor economists expect these trends to continue, and foresee 32 hour work weeks by 1985 (4-day work weeks with a 3-day weekend), and one to two months annual paid vacations. These trends all point to increasing leisure time, and more money available to spend on recreational pursuits.

Mobility

Stanly County has one automobile for every two residents, depicting the heavy reliance on automobile transportation. Aside from the commercial inter-city bus lines, all travel is by automobile. Recreation areas in the county are easily accessible to residents of the City, with most of the important facilities within a fifteen minute drive.

Summary

Although Albemarle and Stanly County are growing slowly, the composition of the population is changing more rapidly. The number of older people, 65 and over, will triple by 1980. The number of young people will remain about the same, and the number of adults 20 to 64 will decline. Family income is rising rapidly despite a loss in total employment.

The greatest decrease in jobs is for males. It is to be expected that the City will try to gain new industries and employment opportunities in the future for males.

Attractive recreation areas and facilities have proven their value as a factor in determining industrial location. Albemarle and its region have a great potential for developing a strong public recreation program to complement the excellent private programs.

Increased pressure will be felt from the older age group for more recreation opportunities. A large segment of all community recreation programs should be devoted to them in the future and quite possibly some areas and facilities will be devoted solely to them.

CHAPTER III

RECREATION STANDARDS AND PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Many agencies and groups concerned with recreation have attempted to develop standards that could be widely applied to areas which vary markedly in size, density, economics and interests. Invariably these standards have proven to be unworkable, unattainable, or at best a rough guide by which a community may measure its efforts. Most standards are developed with large metropolitan areas in mind, and have even more limited value when applied to smaller areas or cities.

The first consideration in evolving a set of workable standards for a city is to define the units which go into the physical pattern of space arrangement, the various recreation areas and facilities. The recreation areas described are those that are considered appropriate for Albemarle, and do not exhaust the great variety of arrangements possible. They have been chosen on the basis that they will provide an adequate range of areas which can be developed according to the interests of the public using them.

Various principles of planning for recreation areas and of site location and layout are included. These principles pertain only to the broader aspects of physical planning for recreation areas and facilities and do not relate to administration, financing or program planning. They are intended to serve as guides to the planning of a recreation system, and should only be adopted after careful study and consideration by committees planning for recreation.

Recreation Areas

The various types of recreation areas recommended for Albemarle are described as follows:

Neighborhood Park: 2+ acres; 1/4 mile service distance;
2,000+ population served.

Neighborhood Playground: 3-7 acres; 1/4 mile service
distance; 2,000+ population served.

Community Playfield: 12-25 acres; 1 mile service distance; 10,000+ population served.

Municipal Park: 25-50 acres; 1 mile service distance; 10,000+ population served.

County Park: 100+ acres; unlimited distance; 40,000 population served.

The following recreation areas are typical of those used in municipalities to meet the public need for recreation space.

Neighborhood Areas

Within easy walking distance of those it serves, the neighborhood recreation areas should be centrally located -- preferably adjacent to the elementary school. Such a location affords school children ready access to the area and can increase utility of both school and recreation areas when certain parts of the school grounds are used for public recreation. Such areas should not be located near major highways, railroads, or other barriers which are a hazard to children.

The Playground

The most frequently provided major recreation facility for neighborhoods is the playground. It is usually the center of recreation activity for people living in the immediate area and is designed to serve primarily children in the 5 to 14 age groups -- although parts of it is often set aside to serve older teenagers and adults.

A playground will usually vary from three acres to seven acres or more. If relatively little space is available for a site it is best to limit the area to children only. With a larger site, provision could be made for adult games and activities. The service radius should be a comfortable walking distance for children.

Typical features include: a paved multiple use area including basketball and volley ball courts; an apparatus area, open space for a baseball or soft ball diamond; shaded areas for free play or quiet games; a spray pool, and a shelter with space for arts and crafts.

The Small Park

The neighborhood park is a beauty spot that adds variety to residential neighborhoods and provides a place for passive recreation. All age groups enjoy such an area and it does not necessarily have a "best" location. It may serve as a barrier between the residential neighborhood and other high activity districts -- such as major highways, industrial areas, and business districts.

A neighborhood park may vary greatly in size, often running from about two acres to six acres or more. It may be located on a site that is undesirable for building purposes because of poor drainage, irregular topography, or odd size. But, these very features may add to the interest of a naturally developed area. Sometimes a neighborhood park will include picnic facilities and areas for free play. Such features should depend on the size of the site and the desires of the public.

Community Recreation Facilities

Intended to serve everyone in the community such facilities should be located so that they are easily accessible. If it is possible to locate community recreation facilities centrally it should be done, but only if general accessibility is enhanced. Typically, suitable sites for such facilities can only be found on the outskirts of cities -- often near or adjacent to high schools.

The Playfield

The playfield is the center of activity for major sports and games for young people of high school age or adults. Sometimes a playground area will be included in the overall design. If possible, the playfield should be located adjacent to or near the high school or junior high school and might even connect with the school grounds.

Typical features include: athletic areas for football and baseball; playfields for girls and women; tennis courts; lawn and other court games; swimming pool and bathhouse; outdoor theater; shelter building; picnic areas, landscaped areas for passive recreation; adequate parking facilities for automobiles.

The Large Park

The large park or municipal park serves the same population as the playfield, except that the stress is on passive forms of recreation. This area usually has some noteworthy scenic characteristic and provides people an opportunity to enjoy the out-of-doors.

The municipal park usually ranges upward from 10 acres to 100 acres or more. Its location in relation to the center of population is not critical provided general accessibility is good. Most users will arrive by automobile, so adequate parking facilities are important. The park might contain an areas or two set aside for active recreation such as a ballfield or tennis courts, but such provision will usually be determined by the size of the park.

The municipal park usually features nature trails, picnic facilities, open spaces for free play, camp sites, parking areas, and large tracts of natural wooded land.

The Recreation Center

The community recreation center is a multi-purpose recreation building usually located on a playfield or municipal park. It offers a wide range of facilities for both active and passive recreation. It is desirable, if possible, to locate the recreation center near a junior high school or senior high school. It is usually designed to serve several neighborhoods, up to 10,000 persons or more. Accessibility by automobile should be good and adequate parking is a necessity.

The community center usually includes an auditorium or gymnasium (often combined), swimming pools, separate meeting rooms for special age groups, an arts and crafts workshop, a kitchen and snack bar, offices for recreation leaders, and other rooms.

County Park

Often, when city and county authorities cooperate in offering city-county recreation programs, county-wide parks and other special recreation areas are developed. Usually these parks are large, running into the hundreds of acres. They set aside or reserve for the public unspoiled tracts of woodland, often bordering on rivers and lakes. These parks or reservations are greatly favored by fishermen, hunters, campers, and nature lovers. Sometimes they contain small

areas developed for games, picnicking, and other activities, but usually woodland is retained in its natural state.

These large parks or reservations are particularly valuable when they preserve tracts bordering on water areas. Private developers and commercial enterprises often gain control of water front property and the public is, many times, excluded or given access only at the payment of a fee.

Specialized Areas

These areas include sites developed for one specific recreation use. There is a growing tendency today for public agencies and private organizations to acquire special sites. Private developers often make these areas available to the public on a fee basis. They include: swimming pools, athletic stadiums, outdoor theaters, public tennis courts, hunting and fishing reservations, Boy Scout Camps, and religious camps.

CHAPTER IV

ALBEMARLE COMPARED WITH OTHER NORTH CAROLINA CITIES

This chapter compares Albemarle with nine other North Carolina cities in its size category, giving comparisons of the recreation budget, general methods of financing recreation, and amounts of recreation land. Some suggestions are made as to what might be reasonable goals for Albemarle to shoot for in expenditures for public recreation and acquisition of public recreation land.

Most cities operating a public recreation program break their budget into two parts, an operations budget and a capital budget. The operations budget includes monies for salaries, maintenance, supplies, equipment, and other annually recurring expenses. The capital budget provides funds for the purchase of land, major construction of facilities, and other large expenditures that do not recur each year. Thus, the operations budget gives a measure of the level of service provided, while the capital budget indicates the expansion or improvement of the machinery needed to provide service.

Operating Budget Comparisons

Ten North Carolina cities were used for purposes of comparison and range in population from 9,071 to 15,716 -- an average population of 13,061. The following table lists these cities, gives their population, annual operating budget, and expenditure per capita for public recreation. The table was compiled from information supplied by the North Carolina Recreation Commission. The figures used are for 1961, except for Albemarle, where the current budget is used. It should be noted that budgets for the cities have probably grown since 1961.

TABLE 6 COMPARATIVE MUNICIPAL RECREATION EXPENDITURES

TEN NORTH CAROLINA CITIES, 1961

City	1960 Population	Annual Oper. Budget	% Expend. Leadership	Expenditure per Capita
Morganton	9,071	\$54,509	45	\$6.00
Washington	9,774	41,900	36	4.29
ALBEMARLE	12,261	29,634*	51*	2.42*
Sanford	12,281	39,305	52	3.20
Roanoke Rapids	13,312	51,000	50	3.83
Jacksonville	13,441	40,049	16	2.98
Reidsville	14,169	48,050	50	3.39
Thomasville	15,090	55,909	45	3.71
Lumberton	15,136	48,300	52	3.19
New Bern	15,716	53,426	34	3.40

*Figures from 1963-64 Budget

The average expenditure by these cities for public recreation in 1951 was \$3.78 per capita. The current expenditure in Albemarle is \$2.42 as noted above. Since the municipal recreation department is new in Albemarle, and this year's budget is the first, the expenditure signifies a good beginning. As new personnel is hired to run the public program, and new areas and facilities are developed and operated, expenditures will increase accordingly. An average expenditure of about \$4.00 per capita for municipal recreation is considered to be a reasonable target to aim for in North Carolina today.

The percentage of the operating budget being spent for leadership is a significant measure of the level of recreation service in a community. Albemarle rates high among the cities in its category in this respect. An expenditure of about 50% of the annual operating budget for leadership is considered to be reasonable and desirable.

Capital Budget Comparisons

The annual operating budget gives a good picture of the size and scope of the municipal recreation program carried on in a city from year to year. The capital budget gives the expenditures for acquisition and development of areas and facilities on which the program is operated. Regardless of the size of the operating

budget, a city is crippled if it is deficient in areas and facilities in which to carry out a program. The following table shows the amounts expended in the ten cities for capital expenditures for a ten-year period.

TABLE 7 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BUDGET - TEN NORTH CAROLINA CITIES, 1951-1961

City	Expenditure 1960	Expenditure 1961	Total Expenditure 1951-1961
Morganton	\$ 1,400	\$ 6,000	\$345,400
Washington	--	10,400	15,400
ALBEMARLE	--	--	75,000*
Sanford	--	1,164	10,413
Roanoke Rapids	40,000	--	205,143
Jacksonville	118,500	5,000	138,500
Reidsville	8,700	5,500	42,104
Thomasville	48,000	4,000	237,200
Lumberton	6,855	9,800	54,055
New Bern	7,565	6,000	65,089

*Estimated

Albemarle's major capital expenditures in the past ten years have been for the acquisition and development of Kingville Park. The site was acquired in 1954 for \$4,000, and later developed with a modern pool, bathhouse, and rest room facilities. Recently, two pieces of playground equipment were added, along with a paved road providing access to the pool.

The nine North Carolina cities listed above have spent an average of just over \$12,000 per year on capital improvements for municipal recreation. However, there are wide variations in the totals spent by various cities, ranging from just over \$10,000 to over \$345,000 during the ten-year period. Many of the cities, like Albemarle, have had a municipal recreation department only a few years, and that helps explain why many have spent so little on capital improvements.

Recreation Acreage Comparisons

All of the ten cities listed have public-owned municipal recreation areas. The following table shows the amount of acreage for each city, broken down into water areas, land areas, and acreage per 1,000 population.

TABLE 8 RECREATION AREAS BY ACREAGE, TEN NORTH CAROLINA
CITIES - 1960

City	Water Acreage	Land Acreage	Total Acreage	Acreage per 1,000 Pop.
Morganton	--	70.0	70.0	7.72
Washington	1.0	30.8	31.8	3.25
ALBEMARLE	--	30.3	30.3	2.12
Sanford	--	52.3	52.3	4.25
Roanoke Rapids	--	40.1	40.1	3.01
Jacksonville	4.0	55.0	59.0	4.38
Reidsville	176.0	419.4	595.4	42.02
Thomasville	800.0	1,355.0	2,155.0	142.80
Lumberton	1.0	46.4	47.4	3.13
New Bern	1.5	33.3	34.8	2.22

As shown in the above table, there is a wide variation in the amounts of land owned by the ten cities and used for public recreation. Reidsville and Thomasville have set aside generous acreages of both water and land areas to be used by the public. Most cities cannot match these figures and should not expect to. However, it should be noted that the other eight cities all fall below the generally accepted standard of 15 acres of recreation space per 1,000 population. This figure should not be accepted as an absolute minimum but more as a desirable target.

Albemarle is deficient in public recreation space, with a total of 30.3 acres. Actually, only a small portion of this total, about ten acres, is being used at the present time. The rest of the land is either undeveloped or not suited for development. If the 15 acres per 1,000 population yardstick were applied to Albemarle, the City would need a total of 185 acres, over 150 acres more than it has at present.

Because of its proximity to an excellent regional recreation area, Albemarle can afford to pare down on its park acreage. But, areas for active sports and games are badly needed. It is quite probable that 75 to 100 additional acres of land, located to satisfy known deficiencies and suitably developed, would meet the needs of the City for at least ten years. Of course, rapid change or growth of the population might produce conditions which would drastically change the picture.

Methods of Financing Public Recreation

Most municipalities in North Carolina operating a public recreation system finance the program with non-tax revenues. Some use a special recreation tax (one to ten mills per dollar) which must be approved by the voters in the city. Fees and charges received from the operation of certain facilities often supplement the recreation budget.

Municipal government experts agree that the current operating expenses budget should be financed from the city's general funds. In Albemarle, revenue from utilities has been used as a source of funds for public recreation. This source should prove adequate in the future for meeting most of the City's current operations budget for recreation.

Capital improvements have been largely financed from funds raised through bond issues. These issues have been increasing in recent years as financially-strained cities strive to keep pace with growing needs. Alternative methods of financing include the already mentioned special tax and general appropriations.

Many North Carolina cities have received gifts of land for public recreation from individuals and organizations. Owners of property needed for recreation sites will sometimes lease the land to the city for a certain period of time, after which the city may reserve an option to buy it.

General Considerations

In order to maintain service at the same level from year to year, a city must make capital expenditures for replacement or repairs to areas and facilities given heavy use by the public. If the level of service is to be improved, as is usually the case, capital expenditures for the purchase of new lands and their subsequent development must be carried out. Many cities phase the capital expenditures on a yearly basis for each department, and plan ahead to fit major expenditures into the overall city budget.

It has become the practice for most cities to purchase land for recreation well in advance of its complete development. The wisdom of this practice has been borne out many times as land prices continue to rise. Public money spent for land today will often buy only half as much tomorrow, and choice sites may no longer be available at any price at a later date.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING AREAS, FACILITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION - ALBEMARLE, N. C.

Opportunities for participation in recreation are offered by public programs, private organizations, and commercial establishments. This survey briefly scans the range of recreation opportunities in Albemarle and its environs, and gives a description of the areas, facilities, and programs offered.

The public recreation program is carried on principally at two locations -- Rock Creek Park and Kingville Park. Playground programs have been operated at each of the five elementary school sites, but no land is owned by the City in these areas.

Private recreation is sponsored primarily by the Wiscasset Memorial YMCA, the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts, the Optimist Club, and Central Methodist Church. These programs enjoy fine support by the public and in turn offer excellent programs for their members.

Commercial recreation establishments in Albemarle are not numerous. They include a bowling alley, movie theaters, and a miniature golf course.

Major recreation areas in Stanly County include Morrow Mountain State Park, reported to be the most frequented State Park in North Carolina; two country clubs (one newly developing); two saddle clubs; and several boat landings and fishing areas on the Pee Dee River, Lake Tillery and Bakin Lake.

Public Recreation

The City has operated a public recreation program during the summer in Rock Creek Park and Kingville Park. One other small site, Herne Park, is owned by the City, but is not used for public recreation. This summer, for the first time, a playground program was run in the City. Kingville Park was

used as the site for one playground, with the others held at the four white elementary schools.

A description and analysis of the city-owned recreation areas follows.

Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek Park is located in the south central part of the City, just south of the intersection of U. S. Highway 52 and N. C. Highway 27 bypass. The land for the park, 22.3 acres, was purchased in 1938 for \$892. Shortly afterward a 40 by 100 foot pool and a bathhouse were built as a WPA project.

In constant operation since it was built, the pool needs repairs. The filter house is poorly drained, causing water to stand in it. As a result, the tanks for the rapid sand filters are rusting out, and the connecting pipes have become badly corroded. Both the tanks and the pipe system need to be replaced. The electrical wiring system is in poor condition, and complete rewiring is needed. Also, the bathhouse is inadequate in size and needs renovation and expansion.

A baseball diamond at the northern end of the park forms the only large open area. It is in need of repairs, including reworking and replanting of the turf and construction of a new backstop.

A paved road leads off Highway 52 into the park, terminating in a small paved parking area below the ball field and adjacent to the pool. Next to the parking lot is a wooded picnic area, bordered by a small tree-lined stream. The picnic area merges with thick woods to the south which cover the rest of the park site.

Over half of the park, primarily that portion that lies outside the city limits, is completely unused, except for a small club house built several years ago by the Police Department. The woods could be cleared of underbrush and developed with nature trails, camping areas, and picnic facilities. Although the stream dries up in dry periods, it could be cleaned of debris and used as a focal point for campers and picnickers.

Almost all users drive to the park by automobile. If it is more fully developed and more heavily used, parking facilities will have to be expanded.

Because of its location, Rock Creek Park can only serve as a city-wide facility -- it is not proximate to

any residential neighborhood. Moreover, it would be dangerously situated for children because of the major highways adjacent to the park.

Kingville Park

Kingville Park is located just south of Kingville School in the Negro community. The land for the park, 10.5 acres, was purchased in 1954 by the City for \$4,000. Subsequently a pool, bathhouse, and detached rest room facilities were built. Shortly after the site was purchased, N. C. Highway 27 Bypass was routed through the northern end of the site, severing it from the community it was to serve. About 2.5 acres have thus been lost, but worst of all, the park has been physically isolated from the area for which it was designed.

The northern end of Kingville Park is covered with scrub growth and broken rocks. A new gravel road runs along the western edge and leads back to the pool site which is located in the southwest corner. The rest rooms are located over 200 feet from the pool. A set of swings and climbing bars are nearby.

On the southeastern part of the site is a raised field about four acres in size and sparsely covered with grass. At the southeastern corner of the field are four large posts intended to serve as the frame for a backstop. The surface of the field is covered with a scattering of embedded rocks and loose broken rocks. Though this surface is rough and hardly suited to field games, it is far superior in quality to the rest of the park for use as a play area.

At the south end of the open field is a pleasant grove of hardwoods which is used for a picnic area and summer playground. Several benches and tables, most of them in need of repair, are provided.

The pool and bathhouse, costing about \$65,000, were put into operation for the first time this summer. The pool measures 35 feet by 75 feet and has diatomaceous earth filters. Both the pool and bathhouse seem to be adequate in size to take care of both the present and anticipated Negro population of Albemarle.

The park does not adequately serve the Negro population of Albemarle as a recreation facility. The swimming pool is more than adequate, but areas for free play, games and sports are sorely lacking. Lack of shade is also a factor that diminishes the general usefulness of the park site. Almost 50% of the Negro population in Albemarle is under the age of 20, and children need level,

well-protected turf areas, preferably shaded, on which to play.

Herne Park

Herne Park is a narrow strip of tree-shaded land, about 1.5 acres in size, located near the junction of South First Street and South Second Street. A rock-lined stream runs the length of the park. Two huts, built and maintained by the Boy Scouts, are situated on either side of the stream. Both are in need of repair.

Because of its constricted size, its location next to a lumber storage yard, and its general inaccessibility from the bordering streets, Herne Park has little utility as a public recreation park.

Azalea Park

"Azalea Park" is the name given by the Recreation Director to a narrow strip of wooded land, about 1.4 acres, which forms a median strip on Azalea Drive. This area is not owned by the City, but certainly City residents will be able to enjoy its flowers.

There is a need for green strips such as this to add variety and interest to residential areas. They should be retained in their natural state, except for the addition of ornamental flowers and shrubs to improve their appearance.

Private Recreation

Private recreation, an organized program sponsored by service organizations, is carried on in Albemarle chiefly by the YMCA, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the churches. "Private" as used here means that the program of the organization is not open at all times to anybody who is not a member of the organization. This survey will describe briefly the programs of each organization, the groups served, and will indicate how the programs fit into the overall community recreation picture.

The YMCA

Wiscasset Memorial YMCA, a \$700,000 facility, is an excellent recreation center. It counts among its membership the following: 958 boys up to age 15, 561 men and boys 16 and over, 765 girls up to age 15, 315 women 16 and over, and 164 senior citizens age 65 and over who are honorary life-time members. It is estimated that slightly over 89% of these 2,764 members participated in some part of the program in 1962.

The YMCA facilities on North First Street are situated on about 5.9 acres of land. Of this total, about one acre is used for buildings and parking leaving five acres in park land and play areas. The YMCA building is staffed by ten full-time employees, twelve part-time employees and twelve volunteers who serve as advisors for clubs operated during the school year.

The main building has a large, well-equipped gymnasium, a new indoor pool, six meeting rooms, two locker and dressing rooms, a large well-designed kitchen with facilities for serving 1,000 people, six offices for adult program leaders, a library with 3,400 volumes, and a recreation room containing six duck pin lanes and six billiards tables. This facility is adequate in every respect to meet the needs of its members.

Two parks are adjacent to and just across the street from the building. Wiscasset Park, a 3.3 acre site, is well-equipped and landscaped. It has a shelter building which contains two large rooms, a game room and an assembly room. Areas for active recreation include a softball field, an apparatus area, large open and shaded areas for free play and picnicking areas. A smaller open turf area adjacent to Wiscasset Park, about 1.6 acres, has one softball field and an area for free play.

In the northwest part of town, in Study Area 4, Wiscasset Ball Park has a baseball diamond and two softball fields. This 5.1 acre facility is owned by the Wiscasset Mills, as are all the other YMCA facilities, and is operated by the YMCA.

The activities offered in the YMCA program and the principal age group served are:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Primary Age Group</u>
Sports (basketball, baseball, softball, football, badminton, volley ball)	7-19
Swimming	All
Arts and Crafts	7-19
Motion Pictures	7-14
Trips	14-17
Contests	7-14
Day Camping	7-14
Softball (only)	Men
Suppers	All
Clubs	7-14

As can be seen from the summary, activities are heavily weighted for young people, particularly in the 19 and under age group. Though youth as a group gets most of the attention, there is an active program for senior citizens. These people finance their own trips and activities, and make a valuable contribution to the total YMCA program. The two age groups with the most leisure time are thus adequately served by the program. Membership in the YMCA is open to anyone in Stanly County though most members come from North and South Albemarle Townships.

Boy Scouts

Albemarle has provided a fine scouting program for several years. The present group of scouts numbers 338 boys, 284 of them white and 54 Negro.

Cub scouting for boys 8 to 11 years of age reaches 123 boys in the white community. Sixteen volunteer leaders, three Cub Masters, and thirteen Den Mothers participate in the program. Seven Den Mothers and a Cub Master serve as volunteer leaders of the 18 Negro Cub Scouts. The Cub Scouting programs are used to teach young boys skills and give them a chance to engage in wholesome games and activities as they prepare to enter the Boy Scout program.

Boy Scouting, for ages 11 to 14, provides the next step in the scouting program. In the white community, 141 boys are active in the Boy Scout program. Four Scout Masters serve as volunteer leaders of the four troops. One Scout Master serves as leader of the 28 Negro Boy Scouts. The program has the same basic aims as the Cub Scout program, but the activities are more

varied and boys learn to accept and discharge responsibility. Skills that can be applied in later life are emphasized, and boys learn to live with nature and in a natural environment.

The Explorers program provides the last step in the scouting program. The minimum age is 14 years, but there is no upper limit. The white community has 20 Explorers and a volunteer Explorer Advisor, while the Negro community has 6 Explorers and one Advisor. Activities in the Explorer Scout program are tailored to the interests of the individual troop. Special emphasis is placed on individual development and self-reliance.

Scout Camp

The Ed Willis Scout Camp for Negroes is the only area in Stanly County owned and operated by the District Scout Council. It is located between Badin and New London.

Other Facilities

Wiscasset Mills owns a site and a hut in northwest Albemarle, Study Area 4, which is used for meetings by one of the Scout troops. The site covers about 1.7 acres, and has a good turf and several shade trees. The hut is of wooden construction and is in good repair.

Herne Park, owned by the City of Albemarle, is also used as a troop meeting site.

Girl Scouts

The National Girl Scout program is effecting a complete and sweeping re-organization designed to result in a program with greater appeal for girls and more closely tailored to their needs. The Albemarle Girl Scouts are initiating the new program as of September, 1963.

At present, the City has a total of 168 Girl Scouts. No full-time leaders operate in Albemarle or Stanly County. However, the City is the headquarters for the County-wide program and three volunteer leaders are in charge. The Neighborhood Chairman is leadership coordinator for all troops in the City and County. She is assisted by the Neighborhood Program Chairman, and the Neighborhood Troop Consultant. Neighborhood, as used here, refers to the whole of Stanly County.

Brownie Scouts are girls 7 and 8 years of age. Two troops of Brownies, with a total of 40 girls, participate in this segment of the program. Four women serve as volunteer troop leaders, assisted by several additional part-time volunteers. The Brownie program has no set requirements, but it stresses activities that appeal to the curiosity, creativeness, and desire to be helpful of young girls.

Junior Scouts, girls 9 to 11 years of age, number about 50. Three troops led by six volunteer leaders and about ten assistants give guidance to the girls. The Junior Scout program emphasizes development of skills and expanding of interests. Proficiency badges may be won, but they carry simple requirements and are designed to encourage exploration - not specialization.

Cadette Scouting is for girls aged 12 to 14 years of age. The City has three Cadette troops with about 60 members. As with the Junior Scout program, six volunteer leaders and several assistants provide leadership. The activity program is designed to help girls grow up and become good citizens. Badge requirements call for specialization which will help a girl acquire social skills and the ability to think for herself.

The capstone of the Girl Scout program is the Senior Scout program for girls 15 to 17 years of age. At present there are only eight Seniors with two volunteer leaders. The Seniors program offers a wide range of flexibility in planning activities which are suited to the interests of the individual and the troop. Development and testing of skills that the girls will need as adults are given high priority.

The Optimist Club and VFW Programs

The Optimist Club has sponsored a Midget Baseball program in Albemarle for more than ten years. The club has made repairs to Efland Ball Park and has hired a full-time director to run the program. Local businesses have sponsored teams and aided in supporting the program.

Boys are divided into two leagues - the six team major and the four team minor. The 15-man teams are made up of boys from eight to twelve years of age. The program runs about a month-and-a-half each summer.

Midget program is open to all boys who want to participate, and is, therefore, a public recreation program sponsored by a private organization. This program should be encouraged and given due recognition

by the community. If the Efird Ball Park is developed into a neighborhood public recreation facility this program should be continued at the site and the Optimist Club should be permitted to sponsor the program as long as it desires.

The Teener Baseball program for boys 13 to 15 years of age is sponsored by the VFW. The team plays home games in Rock Creek Park and competes in a county-wide league with teams from neighboring towns.

Church Recreation

Albemarle churches provide youth programs in Christian Education and occasional special activities for their young people.

One church, Central Methodist, hires a full-time Minister of Christian Education. The church operates the Methodist Youth Center in the western part of town on a tract of land about 40 acres in size. During this past summer the center had a weekly attendance of about 80 young people. A wide range of activities was provided, including table games, dancing, beach trips and other special activities.

At certain times, the center has been opened to the public, providing a valuable addition to the community's public recreation program and ensuring parents that their children had an opportunity to participate in wholesome recreation.

Private Recreation Areas

Several private landings are operated on the lakes and Pee Dee River. A major attraction at Badin is the 18-hole Stanly County Country Club golf course. The County has two saddle clubs, one at Oakboro and the other just outside Albemarle. A newly opened private golf course at Norwood offers golfers a second choice of links. This facility will offer the usual range of recreation areas found in a country club.

Commercial Recreation

Commercial recreation is offered to the public by commercial operators.

Albemarle has a new, well-equipped bowling alley with 24 lanes of ten pins. This facility also has a miniature

golf course in its basement.

The City has two downtown movie theaters, one operating on a part-time basis and the other full-time. Two drive-in theaters are located just outside the city limits.

Public Recreation Facilities in Stanly County

Morrow Mountain State Park, covering 4,135 acres in the Uwharrie Mountain Range, is the primary scenic attraction and recreation area in Stanly County. This park, within six miles of Albemarle, offers a variety of recreation opportunities including: swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking, tent and trailer camping, hiking, and nature study. Facilities include a swimming pool and bathhouse, a boat house, a picnic shelter, tables, benches, and outdoor fireplaces; refreshment stands; a central washhouse and toilets for tent and trailer campers; six vacation cabins, a recreation lodge; a nature museum, and paved roads and parking areas. Residents of Albemarle frequent the Morrow Mountain Park, but it is also heavily patronized by tourists and all trends indicate that State parks can expect a continuing growth of "outside" visitors.

Lake Tillery is accessible from a launching site on Morrow Mountain. This lake is one of two in the immediate vicinity of the park, both created on the Pee Dee River, which bounds the eastern side of the park. The other lake, Badin Lake is also a choice spot for boating, water sports and fishing.

CHAPTER VI

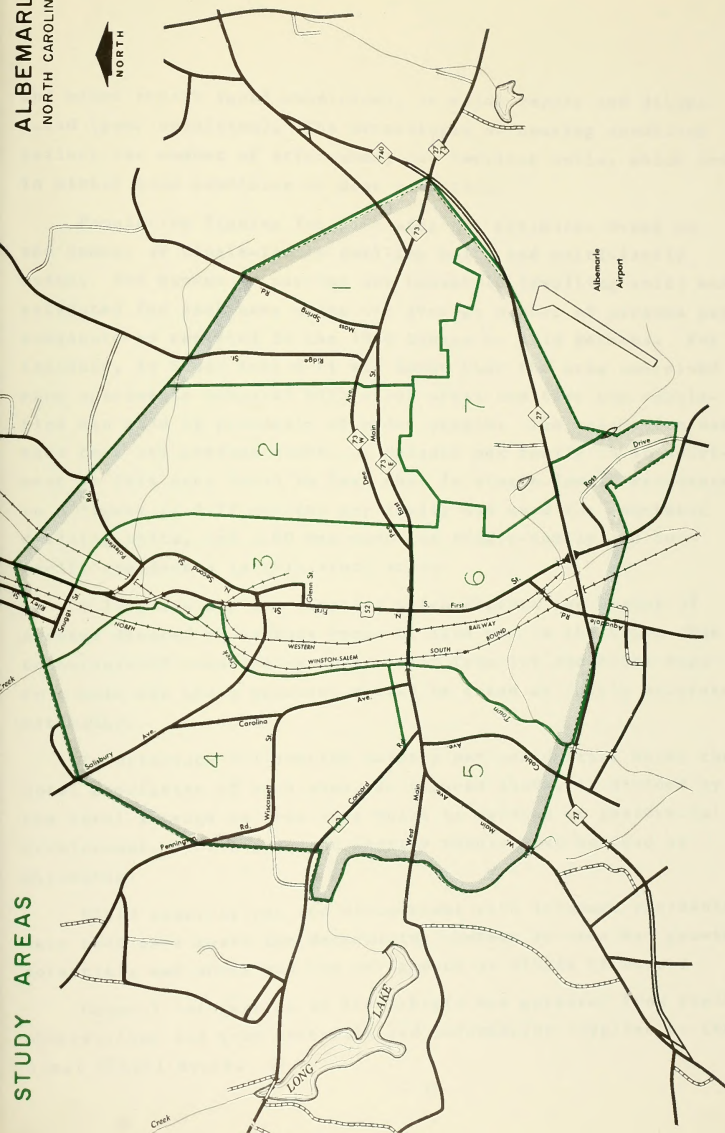
STUDY AREA CHARACTERISTICS

For the purpose of this study the City has been divided into seven study areas or "planning neighborhoods" in order to provide a more thorough and complete examination of the City. Most of the information for this analysis was provided by census data and a land use survey conducted in the City and its environs. Recommendations for the creation or improvement of recreation facilities in each study area were made and further recommendations for the acquisition and development of city-wide and county-wide facilities have also been outlined. Map 5 shows the proposed public recreation areas for the City.

A neighborhood is frequently defined as that area served by a single elementary school. For study purposes it is more convenient to use a finer breakdown in Albemarle because Central Elementary School serves a large, sprawling area not conveniently contained in one "neighborhood". Accordingly, the area served by Central Elementary School has been divided into Study Areas 2, 3 and 6. The other four Study Areas, 1, 4, 5 and 7, are oriented with the boundaries of their respective elementary school districts serving as study area boundaries. Although this method of defining study areas is arbitrary, it does provide a basis for comparisons and a point of departure for considering area characteristics which have a bearing on recreation.

From the land use survey the total number of dwelling units for each area was determined. The housing structures were counted and a note was made to indicate the number of families residing in each, whether single-family, two-family or apartment house.

The housing conditions were determined by rating the conditions of all housing structures, either as no repair



and minor repair (good condition), or major repair and dilapidated (poor condition). The percentages on housing condition reflect the number of structures, not dwelling units, which are in either good condition or poor condition.

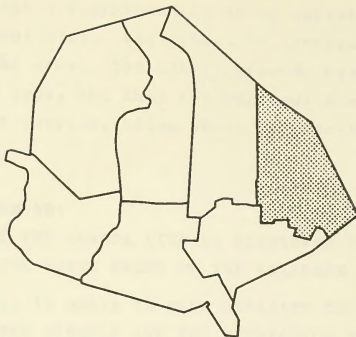
Population figures for each area are estimates based on the number of single-family dwelling units and multi-family units. The number of persons per household (dwelling unit) was estimated for each area using the average number of persons per household as reported in the 1960 Census -- 3.18 persons. For instance, in Study Area 6 it was known that the area contained many apartments compared with other areas and that the population was made up primarily of older people. The assumption was made that the average number of persons per family in an apartment in this area would be less than in single-family residences, so a figure of 2.17 persons per family was used for apartment dwelling units, and 3.00 was used for single-family and two-family residences in this study area.

A land use map was compiled which depicts the amount of acreage devoted to various types of land use in the City. Due to methods of translating information from lot and block maps to a base map these measures should be taken as fairly accurate estimates.

To calculate the average density per residential acre, the total population of each area, as figured above, is divided by the total acreage in that area which is devoted to residential development. The figures on density should also be read as estimates.

Field observations and discussions with informed residents were used as a basis for determining whether an area had growth potential, and where and how new growth is likely to occur.

General information on the schools was gathered from field observations and from materials and information supplied by the local School Board.



STUDY AREA 1

Study Area 1 is located in the northeastern part of Albemarle. It is bounded by the city limits to the north and east, Kingville to the south, and South Morrow and Smith Streets to the west.

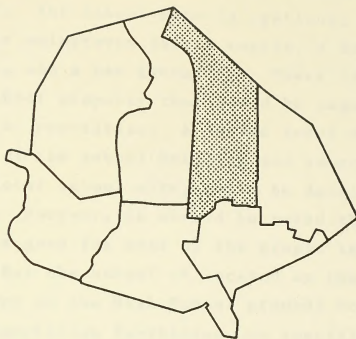
It has 464 dwelling units in which 1,517 people reside. There is some strip commercial development, but most of the developed land is used for residential purposes. It has a total of 170 acres in residential use, with a density of 8.9 persons per residential acre. There is a considerable amount of cleared and wooded vacant land to the north and east, extending out to the city limits.

The housing conditions show that about 94% of the homes in Study Area 1 are in good condition. Most of the homes in the northern part of the area are new or recently built, while those at the south are older but well kept. Growth is going generally north and east.

East Albemarle Elementary School is the only community facility in the Study Area. There are no municipal recreation facilities, although a playground is being operated in the summer on the school site. The school is located on the eastern boundary of the area. The school grounds have no developed play areas of any type, but they are spacious enough to be developed for that purpose, being about 9.2 acres for a school enrollment of 204.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

- THAT THE SCHOOL SITE BE DEVELOPED TO TAKE CARE OF THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN IN THE AREA.
- THAT, IN ORDER TO KEEP SEPARATE THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOLS AND THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT, EACH SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN SEPARATE AREAS AND FACILITIES AND CARRY OUT ITS OWN PROGRAM WITHOUT HAVING TO ENDURE SCHEDULING AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFLICTS.
- THAT AN AGREEMENT WHEREBY THE SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPS THE AREA, AND THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT CARRIES ON A PROGRAM AFTER SCHOOL HOURS MIGHT BE BEST.
- THAT, IN THE EVENT THAT A SEPARATE PLAYFIELD IS DEVELOPED IN THE AREA, THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT WILL NOT LOSE MONEY ON THE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE SCHOOL SITE. EVEN THOUGH THE SCHOOL SITE IS NOT THE MOST IDEAL SPACE FOR THE RECREATION AREA, FACILITIES SUCH AS A PAVED MULTI-PURPOSE COURT, APPARATUS AREA, BALL DIAMOND AND OPEN SPACE FOR FREE PLAY COULD BE PROVIDED.



STUDY AREA 2

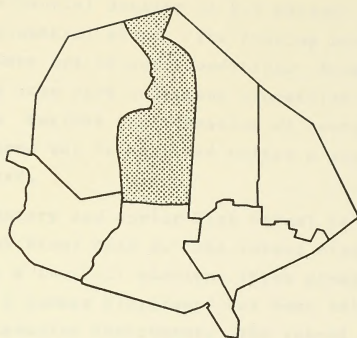
Study Area 2 is located in the north central part of the City. It is bounded by the city limits to the north, Smith and South Morrow Streets to the east, Kingville and East South Street to the south, and North Fifth Street, Boone Park Road, and U. S. Highway 52 to the west.

Study Area 2 contains 728 dwelling units which house 2,278 people. There are no commercial developments in the Study Area. Residential acreage totals 239 acres, with a density of 9.5 persons per acre. The area is heavily developed, but there is still some vacant wooded land in the northern part. New residential growth is extending northward into this wooded area. Older residences predominate in the western and southern section, most of them well kept. The average condition of housing in this area is the best of any in Albemarle, with 98% of the homes in good condition.

Albemarle Senior High School is located in the northern part of the Study Area, and it is the only community facility in the entire area. The school site is spacious, totaling 27 acres. It has four unimproved tennis courts, a turf practice field for football, and a new gymnasium. There is no land adjacent to the school property that could be acquired and developed for public recreation. A wooded tract of several acres, lying east of the school building and comprising about one-third of the total school site, could be developed into a neighborhood park. However, it should be noted that accessibility would not be good for most of the people in Area 2 in view of the fact that the school is located on the outer edge. Although development of the High School grounds would aid in providing needed recreation facilities, no specific recommendation is made for their utilization as public recreational areas.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

- THAT A 4 TO 6 ACRE SITE BE ACQUIRED IN THE SMITH STREET OR MONTGOMERY AVENUE AREAS FOR A SMALL PLAYFIELD CONTAINING FREE PLAY SPACE AND TENNIS COURTS (if possible) TO SERVE BOTH AREAS 1 AND 2.



STUDY AREA 3

Study Area 3 is located in the north central part of Albemarle, lying just above the central business district and including about half of the district. It is bounded by the city limits to the north, U. S. Highway 52, Boone Park Road, North Fifth Street to the east, Main Street to the south, and Little Long Creek to the west.

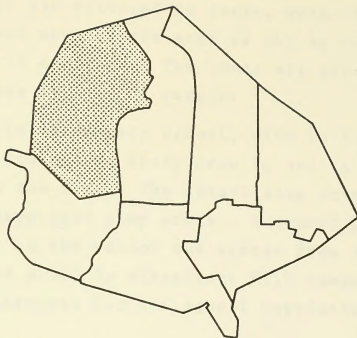
It has 543 dwelling units which house 1,578 inhabitants. The central business district forms a cluster at the southern boundary on South Main Street, and throughout the area scattered commercial and industrial establishments exist. Lying adjacent to the western boundary and inside the area is an elongated industrial spine, set between parallel railroad tracks. This complex forms a major barrier separating Study Area 3 from the western part of town, and it extends southward below Study Area 3, splitting the town's residential area into two major sections.

In the northern extremity of Study Area 3, where the only available undeveloped land exists, some residential development is occurring. Residential density is 9.9 persons per acre with a total of 150 residential acres. The housing conditions reveal that 94% of the homes are in good condition. Several of the older homes in the area have undergone conversion for professional or commercial use. Further proliferation of housing for commercial uses in the area can be expected unless a strict zoning ordinance is adopted.

Central Elementary and Junior High School is located in the southeast corner of Study Area 3. The school site covers 4.5 acres and contains a football stadium, three paved tennis courts, and a gymnasium. A summer playground has been held on the school grounds by the Recreation Department. The school grounds are inadequate for the 1,055 children who use the school and certainly could not provide adequate play space for children of all ages. The only other public facility located in this area is the County Library, which is on North Third Street.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

- THAT THE CORNER LOT ON FIFTH STREET AND CANNON AVENUE (about one acre) BE ACQUIRED AND DEVELOPED AS A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND.
- THAT AN ADDITIONAL PIECE OF LAND (about 3 acres) ADJOINING THE CORNER LOT AND FRONTING ON FOURTH STREET SHOULD BE ADDED IF POSSIBLE.
- THAT SUCH FEATURES AS PASSIVE RECREATION UNDER THE SHADE TREES, A SHELTER FOR ARTS AND CRAFTS, A SPRAY POOL AND APPARATUS AREA SHOULD BE PROVIDED.



STUDY AREA 4

Study Area 4 is located in the northwest part of Albemarle. It is bounded by the city limits to the north, Little Long Creek to the east, Lowder Street and Concord Road to the south, and the city limits to the west.

It contains 835 dwelling units, and has a population of 2,647 people. There is a scatteration of commercial development throughout the area, but the area is predominately developed for residential purposes. There are 272 acres devoted to residential use, with a density per residential acre of 9.8 persons. There is some vacant land to the north and west, and residential development in the area could be expanded. However, some of the vacant land has a rugged terrain and is unsuited for residential development.

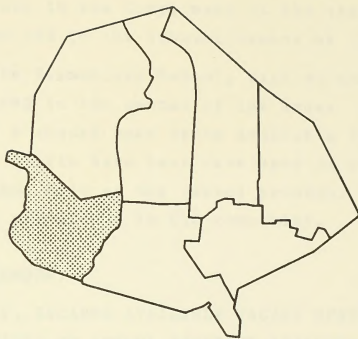
The housing conditions show that 86% of the houses are in good condition, the lowest figure for any white residential area

in the City. A large section in the northern half of the area is owned by Wiscasset Mills, including all structures. The homes are well kept and situated on large, well-shaded lots. Much of the southern part of the area is cut up into small lots, and few trees are in evidence. The homes are crowded together, and many of them are in need of repair.

North Albemarle Elementary School, with an enrollment of 354, is centrally located in Study Area 4, and it is the only public facility in the area. The school site covers 15 acres but there are no developed play areas. A summer playground has been held adjacent to the school and across from it on a green space preserved and owned by Wiscasset Mill Company. The school grounds would be adequate for the school population if they were developed.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

- THAT THE CITY MAKE AN EFFORT TO ACQUIRE AT LEAST 20 ACRES OF OPEN SPACE OWNED BY EFIRD MILLS (Efird Ball Park) AND DEVELOP IT STILL FURTHER AS A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK. THE EXISTING BASEBALL DIAMOND COULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY FIELDS FOR ATHLETICS AND FREE PLAY. THE WOODED AREA SHOULD BE RETAINED AND CLEARED OF UNDERBRUSH TO PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHADED AREAS FOR FREE PLAY AND PICNICKING. BY ALL MEANS, THIS SITE, THE LAST REMAINING LARGE OPEN SPACE IN THE CENTRAL PART OF THE CITY, SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND KEPT AVAILABLE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.
- THAT A SMALL ODD-SHAPED GREEN SPACE (about 3.4 acres in size) AT THE INTERSECTION OF SALISBURY AVENUE AND CAROLINE AVENUE BE MAINTAINED IN ITS PRESENT STATE OF DEVELOPMENT AS A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK. HIGH TENSION POWER LINES PASSING OVER THE SITE RULE OUT ITS USE AS AN ACTIVE RECREATION AREA. HOWEVER, IT IS A SPOT OF BEAUTY AND SHOULD BE PRESERVED.



STUDY AREA 5

Study Area 5 is located in the southwest part of the City. It is bounded by Concord Road and Lowder Street to the north, Little Long Creek to the east, and the city limits to the south and to the west.

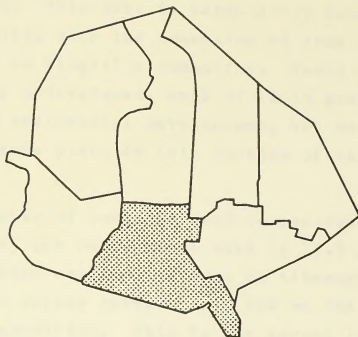
It has 523 dwelling units housing an estimated population of 1,657 people. There is some commercial development, most of it in strips along West Main Street and Concord Road. Residential uses, however, make up most of the developed area. The total number in residential acres is 149, with a residential density of 11.1 persons per acre. There is some vacant land left that could be used for residential development, mainly on the southern and western fringe. Most of the new residential development has been in the south. It is quite probable that this trend will continue with more scattered growth outside the area but adjacent to the south boundary.

A summary of housing conditions for Study Area 5 shows that 94% of the homes are in good condition. As in most of the other residential sections in the City, many of the trees have been preserved and they add to the attractiveness of the area.

West Albemarle Elementary School, with an enrollment of 214 children, is located in the center of the area. This site covers 6.2 acres and has a shaded open space available for free play. No ball fields or courts have been developed on the school site. A summer playground, held on the school grounds, drew the best attendance of any playground in the community.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

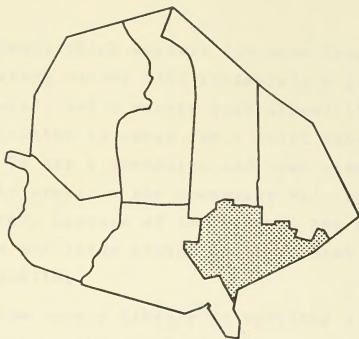
- THAT, BECAUSE AVAILABLE VACANT SPACE IS SCARCE, A PIECE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE SCHOOL SITE BUT ACROSS WEST PARK STREET FROM IT SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AS A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND. WEST PARK STREET, WHERE IT INTERSECTS WITH SHORT STREET SHOULD BE BLOCKED OFF TO INSURE A SAFE CONNECTION WITH THE PLAY AREA.



STUDY AREA 6

Study Area 6 is located in south-central Albemarle. It is bounded to the north by Main Street, to the east by North Fifth Street, East South Street, Kingville, and the city limits, by the city limits to the south and by Little Long Creek to the west.

It has 360 dwelling units which house an estimated population of 1,024 people. The central business district forms a node at the northern end of this area with the spine of the industrial-wholesale district extending down from the northwest corner and curving south eastward to split the area into two parts. Most of the western half is partially cleared or wooded land, much of it reserved by the Industrial Development Commission for industrial use. Homes are scattered on the fringes and there is not likely to be much new residential development in this half of the area except for the southern fringe. The eastern half of the area, using the industrial



STUDY AREA 7

Study Area 7 is located in the southeastern part of the City and encloses all of the City's Negro population. It is bounded to the north by Study Area 2 (see map), to the east by Study Area 1, to the south by N. C. 27 Bypass, and to the west by Study Area 6.

It contains 469 dwelling units housing an estimated population of 1,593 persons. Commercial uses are spotted throughout the area, but the predominant land use is residential development. There is a total of 120 acres of residential development with a density of 13.3 persons per acre - the highest for any area in the City. There is much cleared and partially wooded land which could be developed for residential purposes. Vacant lots are scattered throughout the entire area.

The housing conditions show that only 45% of the dwellings are in good repair, by far the poorest percentage for any area

in Albemarle. With 55% of the structures badly in need of repair or replacement, it is clear that blighted housing is a problem.

Kingville School, which derives its name from the community, includes an elementary school (302 students), a junior high school (202 students), and a senior high school (135) students). The school site contains 10 acres for a total school enrollment of 639 students. It has a gymnasium and open areas used for free play, the only areas in the community well suited for public recreation. However, because of the size of the school enrollment, the space is not large enough to serve both the school children and the public.

A branch of the County Library is operated adjacent to the school site and just to the north of it.

The City owns and operates Kingville Park for the Negro community. The park, severed by N. C. Highway 27 Bypass from the community, contains about 8 acres. A summer playground held this year drew an average of 123 children per day -- the largest attendance of any area in town. Considering that the area is relatively isolated from the community, and that a major highway separates it from the residential areas, the attendance is impressive.

IT IS RECOMMENDED:

- THAT A NEW SMALL PLAYFIELD BE ACQUIRED IN THE SUMMIT STREET KINGVILLE SCHOOL AREA. THE SITE SHOULD BE 4 to 6 ACRES IN SIZE AND PROVIDE SPACE FOR A BASEBALL FIELD, AREAS FOR FIELD GAMES AND SPORTS, AND A SHELTER FOR ARTS AND CRAFTS. THIS PLAYFIELD WOULD SUPPLEMENT KINGVILLE PARK AND PROVIDE THE TURF AREAS THAT THE PARK LACKS.

CITY-WIDE FACILITIES

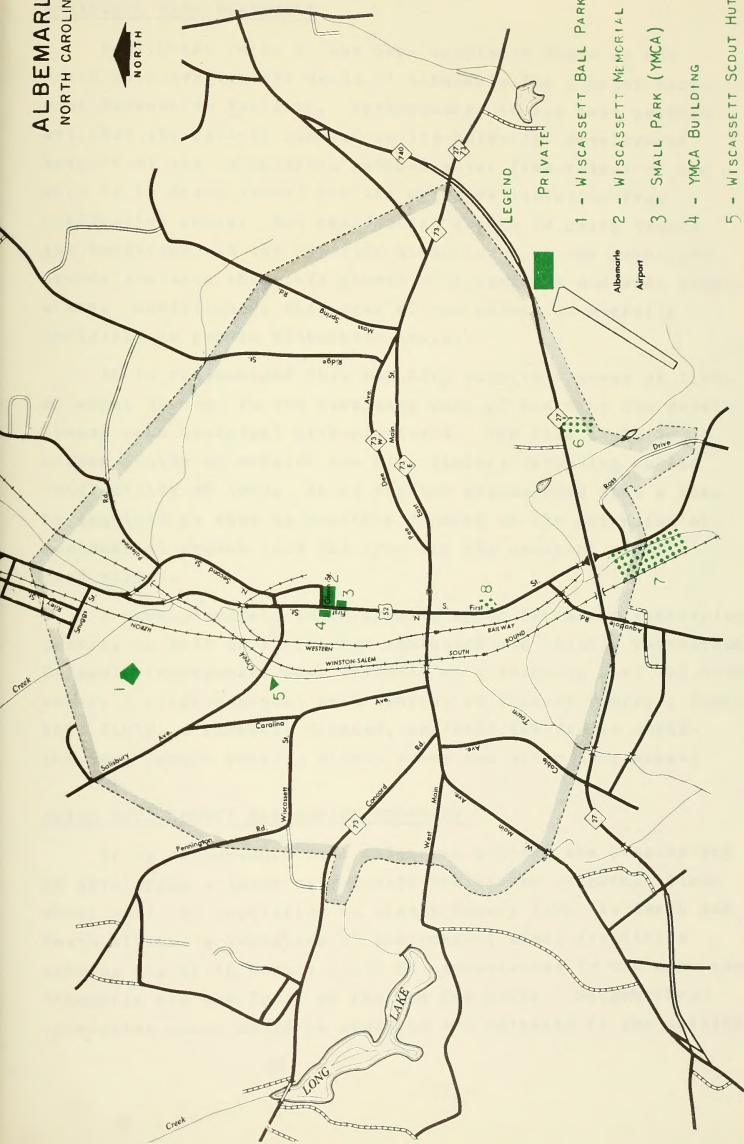
Kingville Park provides an adequate swimming facility for the Negro population, both present and projected. Attendance this past summer averaged only about 24 persons per day. Since public swimming pools customarily operate on an admission fee system, the expenses of operation of the Kingville pool far exceed revenue.

The picnic facilities at Kingville Park provide sufficient space -- but they could be improved with the addition of new benches and tables.

A paved multiple-use area is needed for the community, and it could be located either in the park or in a new playfield inside the community. Placing the area in the park might help stimulate use of the park and other facilities in it. The raised athletic field in the park, about 4 acres in size, might be improved with the addition of topsoil or perhaps re-grading and the planting of new turf. The multiple-use area could be incorporated in a paved parking area which could be located between the pool and the restrooms. These developments would bring the park close to its potential development and would provide an adequate community facility.

Rock Creek Park might be developed further, but, because of serious shortcomings, it would not adequately meet the needs of a municipal park. Open land is not available on the site for development as athletic fields, tennis courts, a community center, and other needed recreation areas. The park can be developed as a unique picnicking and day camp area, taking advantage of its large wooded area and stream.

At the present time the recommended course of action would be to carry out repairs sufficient to keep the park in operation. It is providing a major service as a swimming area, with a daily average of 220 swimmers. With the provision of a new municipal park-playfield, Rock Creek Park can be used to specialize on those activities for which it is best suited and can provide a valuable addition as a city-wide park.



EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES

MUNICIPAL PARK-PLAYFIELD

Rock Creek Park, as has been mentioned above is not adequately meeting the needs of Albemarle for a major city-wide recreation facility. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that the park is limited in its potential development because of its topography, natural cover (two-thirds of the area is in dense woods) and its relative isolation from residential areas. New residential growth is going toward the northeast, in the opposite direction from the park. All trends indicate that this growth will continue and even accelerate. Additionally, this area of new growth is woefully deficient in public recreation areas.

It is recommended that the City acquire a tract of land, 25 acres or more in the northeast part of the City for development as a municipal park-playfield. The site could be either inside or outside the city limits, depending on the availability of land. It is further recommended that a site be acquired as soon as possible because of the extension of residential growth into the area and the constant rise in land values.

A park-playfield would provide space for a new recreation center, as well as fields for athletics and passive recreation. It could incorporate such features as a swimming pool and bathhouse, a pitch-and-putt golf course, an archery range, a football field, a baseball diamond, softball fields, an amphitheater, tennis courts, picnic areas and other play areas.

JOINT CITY-COUNTY RECREATION PROGRAMS

It is recommended that Albemarle explore the possibility of developing a joint city-county recreation program. Since about half the population in Stanly County lives in North and South Albemarle Townships at the present time, facilities serving the whole County could be concentrated in the area near Albemarle and the lakes on the Pee Dee River. Neighborhood recreation areas could be acquired and operated in the smaller

EXISTING RECREATION AREAS

STANLY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA



LEGEND

- 1 - BADIN LAKE
- 2 - MORROW MOUNTAIN STATE PARK
- 3 - LAKE TILLERY
- 4 - STANLY COUNTY COUNTRY CLUB
- 5 - STANLY COUNTY SADDLE CLUB (ALBEMARLE)
- 6 - NORWOOD COUNTRY CLUB
- 7 - STANLY COUNTY SADDLE CLUB (OAKBORO)

towns and thus provide a complete public recreation program for all Stanly residents. Such facilities as the municipal park-playfield could then serve both city and county residents.

Although Morrow Mountain State Park serves as an excellent regional recreation area, pressure from tourists is already making less attractive its facilities to local residents. Consideration might be given to the development of a county reserve or large park available only to residents of Stanly County. If suitable lands can still be acquired on Badin Lake or Lake Tillery, this would be the best general location.

PRIORITY SCHEDULE FOR ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

This schedule breaks down the City's public recreation needs into two sections -- immediate and future.

Immediate Needs for Public Recreation

1. Recreation Building

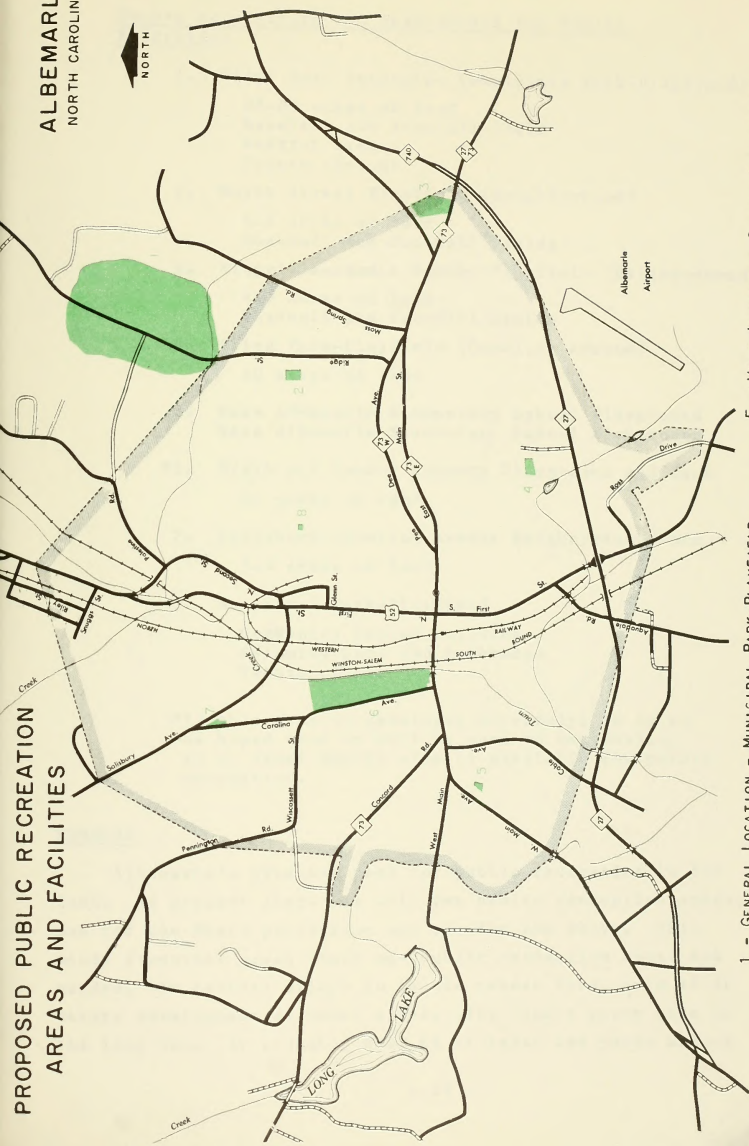
The City needs the immediate use of a building in the white community to serve as a recreation center. If a very desirable location can be found, the City might want to purchase a building. Otherwise, the most satisfactory solution would probably be to rent or lease a structure. Until the use of a building is secured, the winter recreation program will be severely restricted.

2. Rock Creek Park and Kingville Park

- Work should be done on the pool and filter system at Rock Creek Park to assure continued use.
- Improvements should be made on the ballfields at both Rock Creek and Kingville Parks.
- Provision should be made of a paved multi-purpose area at Kingville Park.

PROPOSED PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES

ALBEMARLE
NORTH CAROLINA



1 - GENERAL LOCATION - MUNICIPAL PARK-PLAYFIELD

2 - SMITH STREET PLAYFIELD

3 - EAST ALBEMARLE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

4 - KINGVILLE-SUMMIT STREET PLAYFIELD

5 - WEST ALBEMARLE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

6 - EFIRD PARK

7 - WEST ALBEMARLE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

8 - FIFTH AND CANNON STREETS PLAYGROUND

MAP-5

Future Acquisition and Development for Public
Recreation

1. Ridge Road Extension (Municipal Park-Playfield)
25-40 acres of land
Baseball and football field
Parking area
Picnic shelter
2. Smith Street Playfield (Neighborhood)
4-6 acres of land
Baseball and football fields
3. Kingville-Summit Street Playfield (Neighborhood)
4-6 acres of land
Baseball and football fields
4. Efird Park-Playfield (Carolina Avenue)
20 acres of land
5. East Albemarle Elementary School Playground
West Albemarle Elementary School Playground
- *6. Fifth and Cannon Streets Playground and Park
3+ acres of land
7. Salisbury-Carolina Avenue Neighborhood Park
3.4 acres of land
8. Municipal Park-Playfield
Community Center building
Swimming pool and bathhouse
Tennis courts

*If this area is developed privately, it is to be hoped that it will be open to the public, as no other nearby site is available for public recreation.

SUMMARY

Albemarle's greatest need for public recreation is for land. At present there are only two public recreation areas, one for the Negro population and one for the white. This study pinpoints areas where new public recreation areas are needed. An initial effort to secure needed land, even if it delays development of other sites, will likely prove wise in the long run. It probably will be at least ten years before

the areas recommended for acquisition in this study can be brought to full development. But, a delay of ten years in acquiring the sites will probably result in their not being acquired at all. Most urgent is the acquisition of a site for a major municipal facility. A delay here will surely result in greater expense and the probability that a much less desirable site will have to be considered.

A strong public recreation program can help make Albe-marle more attractive to new industries, and it will provide wholesome activities for youths and adults alike.

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October, 1963

